

REMARKS

Contrary to the Office Action Summary and the statement on page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-53 remain pending in this application, but claims 15-19 and 32-52 have been withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. Claims 1-14, 20-31 and 53 have been examined.

Claims 1-3, 5, 6, 8-14, 20 and 53 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Motoya et al. (JP09-187646) (MOTOYA) in view of Omori et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,689,465) (OMORI). MOTOYA is said to disclose an ion absorbent article comprising an organic polymer resin and an inorganic ion absorbing material supported on the outer surface of said adsorbent article. The Examiner acknowledges that MOTOYA fails to disclose that the article is porous, or that it has inorganic ion absorbing materials formed within the cavities of a porous article. Just comparing the teachings of MOTOYA to the features recited in claim 1, MOTOYA also fails to teach that the porous article comprises fibrils, or that they form a three-dimensional network structure, or that the structure has communicating pores, or that there is a gap between fibrils, or that the fibrils have cavities in the interior of each of the fibrils, or that at least a part of the cavities open at the surface of the fibril.

In order to address the many deficiencies in MOTOYA relative to the claimed invention, the Examiner has relied on OMORI as disclosing a porous bead comprising fine polymer fibers (fibrils) constituting the matrix of the porous beads having a three-dimensional network of continuous pores (col. 15, lines 9-16). Contrary to the representation in the Office Action, Fig. 13, the Abstract and col. 4, lines 52-57 of OMORI do not provide any teaching or evidence that the fibrils have a cavity in the

interior of each fibril. OMORI describes (col. 13, lines 23-36) that its porous beads constitute a continuous network of pores, or "small voids formed in the polymer matrix of each porous bead, wherein voids run through the polymer matrix to thereby form a three-dimensional network structure." What is clear from OMORI is that voids are formed as a space between and among a plurality of fibrils.

OMORI describes that small voids are formed in the polymer matrix of each polymer bead. This just means that spaces (voids) are formed between several pieces of fibrils and does not mean that cavities are present in the interior of a single piece of fibril itself as recited in claim 1 - i.e., cavities in the interior of each of the fibrils itself. The porous bead of OMORI has communicating pores but does not have cavities in accordance with the claimed invention. Figure B illustrating a bead according to the OMORI disclosure clearly shows there are no cavities in a single fibril itself, there are only spaces or voids formed by a plurality of fibrils entangled with one another. As the claimed porous article is not taught by MOTOYA and OMORI, alone or in combination, this rejection should be withdrawn.

Claim 4 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Motoya in view of Omori and Chang et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,418,284).

Claim 7 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Motoya in view of Omori and Cheremisnioff.

Claims 21-31 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Motoya in view of Omori and further in view of Kazuhiko (JP 2003-305458).

These rejections should be withdrawn for at least the same reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1. None of the additional references relied on in these

rejections provide any reason or motivation to modify the teachings of MOTOYA and/or OMORI in such a way that would produce a porous formed article according to the claimed invention having fibrils forming a three-dimensional network structure that contains both a gap between fibrils forming a communicating pore, and cavities in the interior of each fibril itself.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections of each of claims 1-14, 20-31, and 53 under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

Prompt and favorable reconsideration is requested.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

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By: Charles E Van Horn
Charles E. Van Horn
Reg. No. 40,266